

From: Peter Smith
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/24/02 2:11pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Hello!

I want to share with you an idea for restoring competition in the PC market. In particular, this remedy would make it possible to promote both alternative, multi-boot operating systems and browsers for the PC while diminishing Microsoft's monopoly. I call my idea the Public Library Operating System Distribution.

Microsoft has a monopoly on Internet computers in public libraries. Nonetheless, four other PC operating systems---FreeBSD Unix, Linux, IBM OS/2 and BeOS---are perfectly capable of providing the same service as the combination of Windows and Internet Explorer. It would be a relatively simple task to compile distributions of each of these alternative OSes in a form as simple and minimal as possible since these OSes would only operate browsers---Netscape, Mozilla, Konqueror, Opera, Lynx---and simple email programs. These distros might also include the software for FTP, Telnet or other services, but not much more for use in the public libraries. Keeping these public library distributions as minimal as possible would make them highly reliable and make the task of system administration for the libraries as manageable as possible. Microsoft should bear the cost of compiling these distros, which should be quite low, as well as pay for the boot manager software to make it possible to run multi-boot systems in the libraries. This would make the public aware that there are excellent alternatives to Microsoft in an important public institution. If Apple has problems with this remedy, then perhaps Microsoft could purchase Macintosh computers and donate them to the public libraries.

I hope that you will give serious thought to this remedy. Microsoft could bear the cost entirely, as well it should.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Peter G. Smith